



NWCG Smoke Committee
October/November 2013 Activity Update



Outreach and Messaging

- Web Site being updated—members encouraged to log in & note issues.
 - Mike is working with Brenna on a series of blogs to describe our updates.
 - All of our saved data is in the library.
 - Site open to the public, but only members can post. 23 People signed up so far.

2013 International Smoke Symposium

- Everyone who was there in-person has access to the presentation archive available for one year – address questions to Mikel Robinson.
- Pete will approach Mikel w/group access for agencies (NPS, FS, BIA, BLM, FWS, etc.).
- May want to consider use of these presentations during RX-410 classes this year.
- Pete discuss w/Gary potential article in Fire Management Today – Transportation Safety.
- Working with Environmental Frontiers (journal)—posting articles from symposium.
- Feedback from Susan and Diana –Online access during this symposium was very effective—colleagues, managers, etc. were very impressed.
- Repeat? Frequency? At least 2 years out to line up sponsors.
- International venue discussed but may exclude people due to travel issues.
- 140-150 registrants, including virtual - Tracks will be available online in real time, w/participation enabled. Tracks will be available online a year following the symposium.
- Mike B, Mark, Mike George, & Diana Hinson attending virtually.
- For presentations - we only lost a couple presentations through this, mostly unaffected.

NWCG Business

- NWCG RX-410 assessment - This course is being revised, Deb Flemming - meet w/training subcommittee - discuss process, timeline, & scope of revisions – not funded.
- Assessment of RX fire qualifications on state and local level – not funded.
- ARA training working - \$5000 toward making virtually available – Need more funding.
- Geospatial standards document – will want to comment on these from the perspective of an ARA & state level personnel who will want to use this data.
- Access to presentations for NWCG & FS – lack knowledge of what is available online.
- Great Lakes on-board w/accessing virtual recordings.
- NWCG budget is shrinking – will determine funding projects.

Monitoring Cache issues

- Cache resources unavailable. Herb Ronald can't participate due to staff/funding limits.
- May go outside cache sys (MetOne?). Private entity may require fees.
- Outside federal fire ordering sys – less convenient to order on incident.

EPA Webinar – Air Now v.2 updates

- Planned for December.
- SmoC, ARA, FLM & Federal Air Program, support communities to attend.

Potential for ATA Training Workshop

- Conducted first one earlier this year at PNW. Pete to get funding for another likely April/2014 in Boise, ID. Will form small subcommittee to identify content and presentation topics.
- Want to address personnel exposure topic and potential reporting options.
- Considering presentations from trainees that worked w/ARs for perspective & feedback.



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WESTAR monitoring webinar for SmoC

- Gordon Peirce/WESTAR to give presentation on specific monitors in January.

Results of call to Kim Knowlton/NRDC

Study used NOAA hazard mapping, Smoke Images, Geomac fire perimeters, & EPA PM2.5 data.

Conclusions: Smoke significantly impacted counties w/pop. 200 million+ during 2011 and smoke aloft doesn't necessarily impact the ground directly under where it is viewed on satellite.

- Kim was pleased SmoC was aware of the article & is willing to share the data w/SmoC.
- Study Goal: Make people aware of the potential for smoke's impact on large populations.
- Ground based PM 2.5 stations are identified on map, but did not use values.
- Studied medium and heavy density smoke plumes because it shows a greater impact.
- No plans for a webinar/presentation at this time.
- Data needs to be used cautiously. Implies 212 million people were negatively impacted by wildfire smoke in 2011—misleading assumption because ground monitoring data not used. Smoke could be seen, possibly smelled, but not in amounts that would have impact. Study is mapping satellite imagery, not tracking human health reports & doesn't account for Ag burns.
- Will post a one page response to this article on the SmoC website, highlighting some pertinent points on analysis and recommendations for future research.
- **Planned Webinar with EPA on AirNow Tech** – Possibly early December
 - Recent Ver 2 Updates (SmoC, ARA, FLM air programs, & support communities).

Subcommittee Report-outs:

Smoke Technical Topics

- SMG progress – Trans safety chapter discuss super fog, various indices & representation.
- Susan, Mark, Pete, Bill, Sandy discussed visual range material. Susan – revising Bill's summary.
- Chapters in line by January and technical editing/formatting in February.

Smoke Training

- Deb Flemming/NWCG Training Branch Manager on next call to discuss RX 410 revision process & timeline. May be as early as Nov. 8th.
- Smokepedia mobile app beta out by coalition of Rx Fir Councils & Southeast Partnership for Planning & Sustainability.
- Smoke Exposure – video taken on by WESTAR; Workbook – Lead developer Mitch Mumma/BLM & Integrating comments from Stu & John K.; Transportation Safety workbook – Gary to work with Mark on appendix.
- George Broyles & Joe Domitrovich attending conf. –will discuss Smoke Exp Topics.
- Currently not a web resource to support smoke exposure (eg. Dosimeter data, mitigation strategies, CO table we developed, research, etc).
- Brenda Wilmore likely to fill Stu's Co-chair position.

Smoke Managers

- Rick Gillam updated on the group on what is happening at the EPA.
- Good in-depth discussion/summary of the events during the International Smoke Symposium.
- Tentatively set up Mark Melvin as a special guest for the next meeting (In Jan?).
- Bill Malm/Visual Range Report – reviewing & drafting executive summary.



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Round Robin Topics

- Bill Malm has finished draft of JFSP work on visibility estimates to make AQ index calls. Plans to attend meeting w/Al Riebau, Doug Fox, and Cindy. Will get together w/Susan, Pete, & Mark to discuss recommendations. Susan will send Cindy comments & plan a future conference call.
- Rx Fire Coalition - Mark Melvin stepping down as chair of the Rx Fire Coalition.
- Currently large bushfires in Australia, near Sidney and other cities resulting in intense smoke impacts in these areas.
- Need to discuss smoke monitors in the cache (storage location, etc.).
 - WESTAR: Fall/2014 meeting in Denver.
 - Moving forward w/the personnel exposure piece, George Broyles is in contact w/WESTAR. Still needs to deliver the work we have done previously.
 - Highlight EPA EER & personal monitoring PowerPoints. EPA unsure of review timeline.
- Forest Service - Rob Griffith/Assistant Fire Director, CA sent out a safety email on transitions from wild to Rx fire - Pete followed up w/email reminder of the 6 min. for safety reports region wide that discuss transportation safety as well as CO exposure hazards.
- Agriculture Air Quality Task force will have its first meeting in Washington DC first week in December. Fire and smoke are included topics.
- Gary going to follow-up on the Javeline monitors.
- No news on recent Senate hearings on fuels treatments.
- Susan to send out material on 501 Rx Fire effects.
- Visual range finding/Bill Malm's analysis – uncertainty of estimating visual range in high concentrations, by a factor of 2. Recommending a 2 category system instead of 5-6 categories.
- Need comments on Wildland Fire Geospatial requirements – due by December 1st.
- Region 5 Forester recognized the air program & those that support efforts this past fire season.
- Refurbished RAD 57 CO monitors for 35% off available.
- Javeline met devices and monitoring equipment – Gary mentioned outfitting w/CO monitoring & cell capabilities. Pete isn't sure about a grant for them.
- Pete & Mark have article in Fire Mgt. Today on ARA responses.
- JFSP research:
 - Final report to FJSP project #09-1-04-2 Sub-canopy Transport and Dispersion of Smoke: A Unique Observation Dataset and Model Evaluation.
 - JFSP Proj#12-3-1-6, Sensitivity Analysis of AQ to Meteorological Data in Fire Simulations.
- SE Learning Exchange starting their smoke efforts.
- Diana/ODEQ report out from monthly NACAA Criteria Pollutant conference call:
 - Phil Lorang/EPA Senior Policy Advisor gave EER update during call.
 - EPA continuing progress on demonstrations for high wind events in Arizona metro areas. Expect to propose action on the 5% plan for PM2.5 for Phoenix in January. Proposal will take all concurrences into account for these events.
 - EPA invited to WESTAR's meeting. Summary of listening sessions on WESTAR website: <http://www.westar.org/Docs/Business%20Meetings/Fall13/WESTAR%20Fall%202013%20Agenda.html>
 - Region 8 in process of reviewing most recent stratospheric ozone intrusion event from Wyoming. Have draft of tech support document and making rapid progress.
 - Tracking flags placed on PM2.5 data that might play role in 2012 standard designations. Deciding if data is relevant for flags & demo status. Demo deadline is December.
- Mark in communication w/Melina Sasha/NV DEQ. In process of doing EER for RIM fire-PM.
- Large Fire conference in May/Missoula – Considering half day on smoke. Proposal deadline is Dec 1, paper abstract deadline by end of January.
 - Pete can do SmoC poster for conference. Susan has some abstracts set aside for this.